### Before the

# FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Revitalization of the AM Radio Service	)	
	)	MB Docket No. 13-249
	)	

To: The Commission

# COMMENTS TO NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING

Porter County Broadcasting Holding Corp., LLC ("Porter County Broadcasting") pursuant to the FCC Rule Section 1.401, submits its comments to the above captioned Notice of Proposed Rule Making ("NPRM") wherein the FCC seeks to investigate possible changes to its rules which would allow AM broadcasters to better serve the public.

## Introduction

Porter County Broadcasting is the licensee of Class D AM station WAKE operating on 1500 kHz at Valparaiso, Indiana. I, Leigh Ellis, President of Porter County Broadcasting, am submitting these comments on behalf of myself and my family. We operate WAKE and would very much want to see the revitalization of the AM radio service for many reasons. First and foremost WAKE was the first commercial broadcast station serving Valparaiso and Porter County, Indiana, having signed on in November of 1964. We have served the community for almost 50 years but the signal has lost its impact over the years for several reasons.

Instead of talking about the obvious deterioration of the AM band let us discuss the major reasons WAKE needs a FM translator. We are located between Chicago and South Bend, Indiana and there are many signals penetrating our market but none serve the needs of the local public. Further, in the early

80's, the FCC granted a license to new station WNDZ at 750 kHz on the AM dial in Portage, Indiana, less than 12 miles from WAKE. The WAKE 1500 kHz signal is the first harmonic of 750 kHz, and there has been interference to the WAKE signal from the day that WNDZ first signed on the air. During their application process and once the station commenced operation we submitted endless paperwork asking for relief from the FCC with no results. I made trips to Washington and had a personal meeting with the FCC, again with no relief. During the period from signing on to today, WNDZ has been granted multiple power increases which have totally disintegrated WAKE's signal to the north and northwest. WNDZ programs to Chicago area foreign language listeners which can make attempts to listen to WAKE in Portage, which is part of our market, particularly frustrating. Porter County Broadcasting would like some relief from these issues not only for our city of license but for the community of Portage, Indiana which we once served, and believe an FM translator may help to alleviate some of these issues.

# Section A. The NPRM proposal to open a filing window for the purpose of allowing AM stations to file an application for construction permit, and ultimately receive a license for a new FM translator to enhance existing service to the public would be of great value to WAKE. During daytime hours this would give us the ability to serve not only our existing daytime listeners but the ability to serve listeners within our 2 mV/m contour that cannot hear us at this time. An even more significant benefit would be the opportunity to serve the same listeners day and night. Our 25 watt nighttime signal provides very limited service.

The limit of one translator per AM station is a concern to us because we may not be able to fill in all of our 2 mV/m contour with one 250 watt translator. For that reason we ask the Commission to please consider, once the filing window has closed, providing an ongoing opportunity for AM stations to file for additional FM translators, as long as they comply with the requirement that existing service not be duplicated.

We know that the availability of frequencies for new FM translators is extremely limited in an area like ours. We believe that a single FM translator would be of minimal value to Class A clear channel stations operating with 50 kilowatt day and night facilities. If that assumption is correct we recommend that the first priority for filing for a second translator be given to stations like WAKE, which are Class D stations with no protected

nighttime service, and that Class A stations be ineligible for filing in the first filing window absent a showing of special need.

- **Section B.** The FCC proposal to modify its daytime coverage standards for licensed AM stations that will remain in the same community of license to allow coverage of either 50% of the area or 50% of the population within the community boundary would be a welcome benefit should our station lose its site and we need to relocate.
- Section E. The NPRM proposes to extend use of electrical power saving technology called Modulation Dependent Carrier Level ("MDCL") control technologies. Porter County Broadcasting is in favor of third party products provided that the Commission take a position on third party MDCL use which clearly provides protection to broadcasters from potential interference.
- Section F. The NPRM raises the possibility of modifying its AM Antenna Efficiency Standards. This would involve shorter AM towers and/or an abbreviated ground system radius. With the difficulties that currently exist in locating suitable AM transmission sites, it is Porter County Broadcasting's belief that the use of shorter towers and abbreviated ground systems should be allowed by the FCC as long as the resulting decrease in efficiency does not cause instability resulting in interference to other stations.
- **Section G.** This section of the NPRM provides an opportunity to submit recommendations that are believed to further advance quality of the AM service and build a base upon which a superior AM service can evolve.
  - 1. We support allowing those AM licensees who wish to do so to file for a digital FM facility in the CH 5 and 6 TV bands or another frequency block in the VHF/UHF spectrum. The benefit here is twofold. First, for stations such as WAKE that may want to continue to operate in the AM band and implement improved facilities, the Channel 5/6 proposal would lessen the number of stations in the 540 1700 kHz band. This reduction in stations should allow changes in he band such as 20 kHz or 30 kHz channel spacing, introduction of broadband

stereo digital transmission capability and the ability to provide quality program service to the public through the use of digital transmission.

2. Many stations are limited by the need to protect the 0.5 mV/m 50% nighttime skywave contour of co-channel clear channel AM stations or the 0.5 mV/m groundwave contour of first adjacent channel clear channel stations. It is believed that this service is no longer of value to most listeners to these stations. It is suggested that the nighttime skywave service no longer be protected and that service to the 2.0 mV/m contour at night be the limit of protected service for both co and first adjacent channel Class A stations.

Conclusion We thank the FCC for initiating a proceeding that could help AM broadcasters to more effectively serve the public. We do note that the Porter County Broadcasting vision is a long term vision, which we are deeply invested in. As helpful as some of the technical proposals in the NPRM may be, we feel they may not achieve a significant and noticeable change in the AM services long term, and that a short-term improvement would be to allow AM Broadcasters to implement full-time FM service through use of an FM translator. Ultimately, implementation of the proposal filed by the Broadcast Maximization Committee which would provide for the migration of AM stations to Channels 5 and 6 on a voluntary basis, permitting transmission facilities to deliver a consistent 24 hour FM signal, is believed to be the best long-term solution for AM broadcasters. We believe that there is a future for AM Radio and that future can be seen by implementing full digital transmission with broader bandwidth, which could lead to a healthy vibrant radio service. Porter County Broadcasting urges the FCC to place a high value on that goal.

Respe	ectfully submitted,			
Porter County Broadcasting Holding Corp., LLC				
Ву:		/SS/		
	Leigh N. Ellis	January 21, 2014		